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SUBJECT: FARC 47TH FRONT LEADER 'KARINA' DESERTS

REF: BOGOTA 1473

Classified By: Political Counselor John S. Creamer  
Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

SUMMARY

1. (C) FARC 47th Front leader "Karina" voluntarily deserted on May 18 in Antioquia due to continuing military pressure on her unit. The GOC made no promises to Karina regarding her inclusion in the Justice and Peace Law (JPL) program, but a Defense Ministry official told us that it is likely she will be included. The local International Red Cross delegate said how the GOC handles pending criminal charges against Karina will impact other FARC commanders' decisions on whether to desert the group. Karina is rumored to have been involved in the murder of President Uribe's father, but no evidence linking her to the crime has emerged. END SUMMARY.

'KARINA' DESERTS

2. (U) On May 18, notorious FARC 47th Front leader and most senior female military commander Elda Neyis Mosquero Garcia ("Karina") turned herself in to the Colombian Army's 4th Brigade in Argelia, Antioquia with her 17 year old daughter. The Colombian military had made a concerted effort to capture or kill Karina since 2006 and intensified efforts to capture her two months ago. Karina said that since 2006 "I have been unable to sleep in the same bed for more than 2 nights in a row" due to military efforts. The increased military pressure prompted her family and friends to negotiate her demobilization with Antioquia Governor Luis Alfredo Ramos. Karina claims to have deserted as she was surrounded by Colombian armed forces and starving.

INCLUSION IN JPL PROGRAM

3. (C) The GOC made no promises to Karina regarding a reduced sentence or her inclusion in the Justice and Peace Law (JPL) program. Defense Ministry official Monica Cifuentes told us that Karina's case would be reviewed by the Ministry's Operative Committee for Abandoning Arms (CODA) to determine whether charges against her for rebellion and illegal bearing of arms could be pardoned. CODA will also decide if she could be admitted into the GOC's reintegration program. CODA will meet within 2-3 weeks to decide.

14. (C) In contrast, Cifuentes said charges against Karina for kidnapping, homicide and terrorism cannot be pardoned. The Ministry will review Karina's case and decide whether to recommend her inclusion in the Justice and Peace Law process.

To qualify, Karina must agree to confess her crimes, compensate her victims, and collaborate with the GOC in taking down the 47th Front. Cifuentes said if Karina is tried under the JPL, she will receive 5-8 years in prison instead of the 50-100 years called for under the ordinary criminal code (see reftel). Cifuentes believes the MOD will recommend that Karina be included in the JPL since she voluntarily demobilized.

#### POSSIBILITY FOR OTHER HVT DESERTIONS

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15. (C) Defense Minister Juan Manuel Santos predicted that Karina's desertion would further undermine the 47th Front and encourage other high value target (HVT) desertions. Santos said, "Karina was known for her cruelty and daring ... she was a very important target." Local International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) delegate Barbara Hintermann told us that since the deaths of FARC Secretariat members Ivan Rios and Raul Reyes, the ICRC has seen the Secretariat's control over individual fronts steadily deteriorate. Front commanders are showing greater autonomy in decision making, and several have voiced interest in demobilizing. She said how the GOC resolves Karina's legal situation will influence other front commanders in their decisions on whether to desert or to remain inside the group.

16. (C) Karina is rumored to have been involved in the murder of President Uribe's father in 1983, but she has publicly denied this. There is also no evidence linking her to the killing. She has also denied involvement or responsibility for massacres. The GOC will begin debriefing Karina the week of May 26, and may also use her in psychological operations to encourage other FARC commanders to desert.

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